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ABSTRACT

An individualized internship program was developed for a 22-year-old college senior and elementary education major at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College (Indiana). The student had shortcomings in the areas of confidence, poise, classroom management skills, and discipline skills. The internship lasted 8 weeks and required the student to teach in the classroom (two mornings a week), to attend individual counseling sessions, to attend a classroom management and discipline class, to keep a journal of activities and experiences, to read suggested items in the discipline field, and to write reports on those readings. Results were assessed using classroom observations, conferences, standardized tests, and self-evaluation by the subject. The results indicate that great gains were made in the areas of confidence, poise in the classroom, classroom management skills, and discipline skills. (JM)

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INDIVIDUALLY PRESCRIBED EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

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INDIVIDUALLY PRESCRIBED EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

The subject, an elementary education major enrolled at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in Terre Haute, Indiana, had just completed her student teaching assignment during the fall semester of the 1981-82 academic year. Although obtaining a passing grade in student teaching, it was apparent that the chances of being employed as a beginning teacher were limited by some rather serious shortcomings. As a result of these concerns, a conference was held with the S, her parents, her methods instructor and supervisor, and the Chairperson of the Department of Education. The purpose of the conference was to discuss the S's past performance, goals for the future and alternative avenues available to meet stated goals. The conference resulted in agreement by all parties concerned that the S would complete an internship in conjunction with an individual study project. This would be in addition to her regular class load at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. The format that the S followed was developed from the college's Internship Program.

Independent Study Program

The co-author was contacted by the S's college supervisor and asked to serve as a consultant in the area of classroom management and discipline. On February 24, 1982, the consultant met with the S at Indiana State University for the purpose of

getting acquainted and gaining information about her past experiences. During this session, Glasser's Reality Therapy Techniques were employed throughout the discussion.

The S was asked to write her goals for the project. Her stated goals were "to gain confidence in the classroom, find discipline techniques that work for me and ultimately to manage a classroom successfully both on my own and during observations".

As a result of the conference, an educational contract was drawn up between the consultant and the S. The objectives included in the contract for the S were to:

1. Improve self confidence both in and out of the classroom.
2. Determine the S's own disciplinary style and technique.
3. Manage a classroom successfully on her own and during observations by supervisory personnel.

In addition to the objectives, the responsibilities of both parties were included. The S agreed to:

1. Read books and materials suggested to her pertaining to classroom management/discipline and to write reports covering the major points contained therein. In addition, discuss how she might benefit from the books and materials she read.
2. Attend and participate in Secondary Education 450 - "Classroom Management and Discipline" - at Indiana State University each Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

3. Complete suggested written exercises on self-awareness, awareness of others and management/discipline.
4. Prepare lesson plans for the class in her assigned school.
5. Assist and teach in her assigned school each Tuesday and Thursday morning beginning March 9, 1982, and ending May 6, 1982.

To assist the S in meeting the objectives of the contract, the consultant agreed to:

1. Hold an individual conference with her each Thursday from 2:15 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.
2. Suggest materials appropriate to established goals for her to read.
3. Respond to reports and written assignments to provide feedback.
4. Involve her in class activities in Secondary Education 450 and provide handouts appropriate to topics under discussion.
5. Visit her classroom periodically for the purpose of evaluating progress.
6. Work cooperatively with the co-author who was the S's advisor, instructor and supervisor.

The S was required to read a total of nine books during the project. She turned in a written report each week at her conference with the consultant and a new assignment was made

at that time. The S read and reported upon Dare to Discipline by Dr. James Dobson, Assertive Discipline by Lee Canter, Making it Till Friday by James Long and Virginia Frye, Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom by Rudolf Dreikers, et. al., Schools Without Failure by William Glasser, Discipline or Disaster by Emery Stoops and Joyce King-Stoops, Disruptive Student Behavior in the Classroom by Devin Swick and Motivation by Raymond Wlodkowski. In addition, the required text for the class at Indiana State University was The Discipline Book by Curwin and Mendler. The S demonstrated the ability to understand the basic tenets of each book and reportedly gained insights into and understandings of classroom management and discipline as a result of her study.

The college supervisor also met with the S weekly. Topics such as daily lesson plans, alternative teaching techniques, classroom arrangements, as well as the S's poise, voice level and projection were discussed. The S was encouraged to experiment with the various ideas discussed during these sessions.

The Internship

An internship was discussed by the college supervisor and the consultant. Approval was sought and obtained from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College for the S to complete an internship in one of the local schools as an integral part of the total program. The internship was set up through a program already

in place at St. Mary's with modifications to meet the specific needs of the S.

The college supervisor established an eight-week internship at a local elementary school where the S would be working with a first grade class. Because of the S's class schedule on campus, the internship was organized on the basis of two mornings a week - four hours on Tuesday morning and four hours on Thursday morning. The S would begin by observing, then teaching a small reading group and gradually assuming responsibility for the entire program on those days she was in the building. It was agreed that the S would prepare lesson plans and complete all other responsibilities normally associated with teaching.

It was decided that classroom visitations and observations would be an integral part of the internship. Both the college supervisor and consultant were to visit the classrooms on an alternating basis resulting in the S being visited approximately once each week throughout the eight-week period. In addition, the classroom teacher was asked to make at least one formal observation. A request was made that the building principal observe one time near the end of the S's internship.

An observation form was devised which reflected those characteristics and competencies needing improvement by the S. All observations were recorded on this form. Personal characteristics included were: exhibits poise in the classroom, makes

mature judgments, uses good eye contact, accepts constructive criticism, demonstrates initiative, and exhibits creativity. Professional competencies included were:

1. Completes routine teaching duties.
2. Gives clear instructions.
3. Uses available classroom facilities.
4. Controls class effectively.
5. Keeps students on task.
6. Deals with discipline problems effectively.
7. Carries out assigned responsibilities.

Four ratings were used on a continuum from needing improvement to excellent. Since all categories had been assessed previously as needing improvement, the preliminary observation scores were assumed to rest in that category.

The program at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College required that the S keep a journal of her experiences during the internship. Progress reports by the S were a part of the journal. The consultant suggested that at the end of each morning spent in the classroom, the S enter in the journal feelings about her work that day, i.e., examples of successes including techniques used, problems encountered, whether solved or unsolved, and feedback both from students and her supervising teacher about her instructional techniques and classroom management and/or control.

A St. Mary-of-the-Woods counselor was invited to meet with

the S's consultant and college supervisor to consider administration of some scale in determining the S's level of self confidence at the beginning and end of the internship. The counselor used the California Psychological Inventory for this purpose. The counselor administered the inventory twice, as a pre- and post-test, in order to assess any gains the subject might make during the internship. A meeting was scheduled between the S, the counselor, her college supervisor and the consultant for an evaluation of the results. The S responded well to the conferences, indicating that the results were accurate and helpful.

The S met responsibilities well. Her internship responsibilities were assigned in addition to her regular class load at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. She read and wrote reports on nine books regarding discipline and classroom management. She made the required entries in her journal, prepared lesson plans and prepared materials for her class. Her conduct was, at all times, responsible, dedicated and professional.

Results

The areas of concentration targeted for improvement were self confidence, poise in the classroom, discipline skills and classroom management skills. The consultant developed an observation form to be used by all observers which reflected those behaviors needing improvement. All were considered below average

or poor when the S embarked upon the internship program. The observation form called for responses at any of four levels: (1) needs improvement, (2) shows improvement, (3) adequate, or (4) excellent. To determine gain scores during the internship, all categories on the observation form were considered as needing improvement at the start. This resulted in a total beginning score of 13 on the personal and professional characteristics used.

Approximately halfway through the internship, the S self-evaluated the characteristics on the observation checklist. Her total score was 28 - an increase of 15 points in one month. The S's final self-evaluation at the end of her experience resulted in a score of 45 on the checklist. This represented a 17 point gain over the previous evaluation and a 32 point gain overall.

Total gain scores for the observers for the internship were 33 for the supervising teacher, 32 for the St. Mary-of-the Woods College supervisor and 34 for the consultant. The observation done by the principal had to be considered an invalid response since responses were not made for all categories on the checklist.

An analysis of the checklist resulted in four items reflecting confidence, two reflecting poise in the classroom, four reflecting management skills and three reflecting discipline skills. Table 1 reports gain scores on each for the college

supervisor, supervising teacher, consultant and S. It is evident that development programs of various types can coincide with the Internship Program already in place at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. It is suggested that others consider the internship format as they structure their respective programs.

Table 1

Gain Scores During the Internship

Characteristics/ Competencies	College Sup.			Supervising Teacher			Consultant			Subject		
	Pre	Post	Gain	Pre	Post	Gain	Pre	Post	Gain	Pre	Post	Gain
Confidence	4	15	11	4	15	11	4	14	10	4	13	9
Poise	2	8	6	2	8	6	2	7	5	2	7	5
Classroom Management	4	12	8	4	13	9	4	14	10	4	13	9
Discipline	3	10	7	3	10	7	3	12	9	3	11	8
Totals	13	45	32	13	46	33	13	47	34	13	44	31

All three observers reported the greatest gains in confidence on the part of the S. A total gain score of 32 was reported by observers. The second greatest gain reported by observers was in the area of classroom management skills represented by a total gain score of 27. A total gain score of 23 was reported in the area of discipline skills while the

fourth area, poise, reflected a total gain score of 17.

Self-evaluation by the S appears to support the three observers' scores. The S reported her greatest gains in confidence and classroom management followed by discipline skills and poise, respectively.

The California Psychological Inventory contains 18 standard scales grouped into four broad categories. These four classes of scales are Class I - Measures of Poise, Ascendancy, Self Assurance and Interpersonal Adequacy; Class II - Measures of Socialization Responsibility, Interpersonal Values and Character; Class III - Measures of Achievement Potential and Intellectual Efficiency; and Class IV - Measures of Intellectual and Interest Modes. A profile of the S's pre-test and post-test results was prepared by the counselor. Improvement was noted in all scales except Socialization, Flexibility and Femininity.

Class I and Class II categories were deemed most appropriate for this program. The S reflected a gain score of 62 from pre-test to post-test, raising her subscale scores from below the mean to approximately one-half above the mean. All subscale scores reflected positive gains except Socialization, which reflected a loss of 7 points.

The counselor's interpretive report of the pre-test began with the following statement: "S's profile is generally low at this time, indicating that she is having some interpersonal

difficulties. She is not feeling sure of herself right now and is uneasy in situations of tension and decision making." The counselor's interpretive report of the post-test results stated "S's generally elevated profile level indicates that she sees herself functioning fairly effectively both socially and intellectually (not necessarily academically). This represents a change from her previous profile which was generally low and indicated difficulties in interpersonal adjustment."

Summary

The S was a 22 year old college senior and teacher education major at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College with some obvious shortcomings in the areas of confidence, poise, classroom management skills and discipline skills. An individualized internship of 8 weeks was established, utilizing classroom teaching experience, individual counseling, part-time attendance at a class in classroom management and discipline, a journal of activities and experiences, plus suggested readings in the area of discipline.

Results were assessed using classroom observations, conferences, standardized tests and self-evaluation by the S. The results indicate that the S made great gains in the areas of confidence, poise in the classroom, classroom management skills and discipline skills. As a graduate of St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, the S will seek a career as an elementary teacher.